

Informing Students of a Tragedy

A guideline for such an announcement might be:

Today we received tragic (or sad) news. We learned that one of our students, _____, died by _____. (Give additional appropriate information about the facts of the event.). When things like this happen, people have all different kinds of reactions, like shock, sadness, fear, and anger. Those reactions may rise and fall throughout the day, and even for days to come. Some of us will want to have quiet time alone and others may want time to talk with peers or adults. Some of you who didn't know _____ may be ready for teachers to return to academics sooner than others. We all just need to practice patience and respect for each other.

We can take some time to talk about this now. When most of you are ready to return to learning, those who still wish to talk or think about this may go to the _____(library?) which we've set aside so you can gather with friends. (If there are other supervised gathering places, state that here.) You will have to sign out of your class as you leave and sign in to the _____ as soon as you arrive. We recognize the need for you to gather with friends to talk, so we are providing (this place) (these places) for you to be. **It is important that all students be in some setting that has an adult present.** If any of you wish to talk one-on-one with the school counselor, she will be in her office and will see students during the day.

The school day will remain on schedule, but teachers in any class may suspend regular classroom activities in order to allow you to talk about this event. Let us know how you're doing as we move throughout the day.

At this point we know the following about the memorial/funeral arrangements....

At this point, lead some discussion time.

We will continue to keep you updated as this unfolds. Further news will come by (give details on how updates will be handled.)